FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Inspiring Trust, Assuring Safe & Nutritious Food

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India

Understanding Food Safety Regulatory and Ecosystem

Induction training programme for Food Safety Officers
Jaipur, Rajasthan

12.01.2026

प्रशंसा सिंह
सहायक निदेशक (तकनीकी)
भारतीय खाद्य संरक्षा एवम मानक प्राधिकरण स्वास्थ एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय

Legislative Landscape Prior to 2006

Law	Year
Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act	1954
Fruit Products Order (FPO)	1955
Meat Food Products Order (MFPO)	1973
Essential Commodities Act,	1955
Milk and Milk Products Order (MMPO)	1992
Vegetable Oil Products (Regulation) Order	1998
Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order	1998
Solvent Extracted Oil, De-Oiled Meal and Edible Flour (Control) Order	1967

Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006

Challenges of the Previous System:

- Jurisdictional overlap
- Administrative duplication
- Inconsistent enforcement standards
- Absence of a unified, comprehensive standard-setting mechanism.

Mandate of FSSAI

- **Adulteration of foodstuffs and other goods falls under the concurrent list** of the Indian Constitution, making both State and Central Governments responsible.

- **As per Section 29(1) of the FSS Act, 2006, the Food Authority and State Food Safety Authorities are responsible for enforcing the Act.**

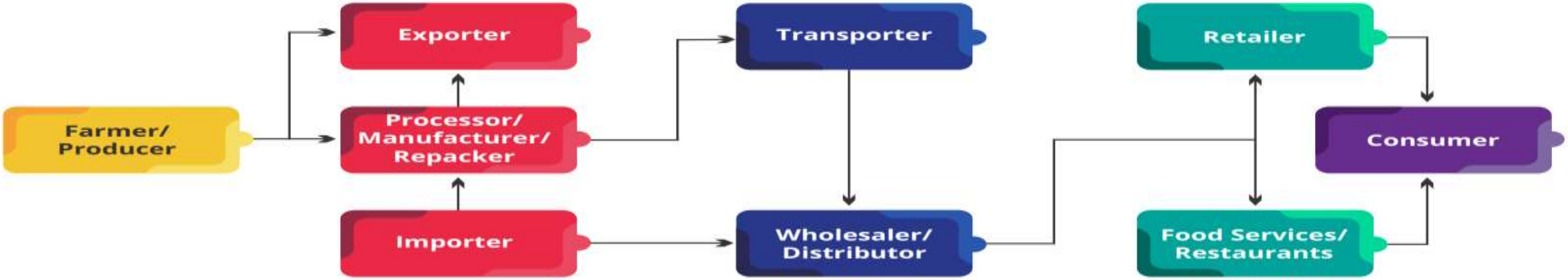
An autonomous body established under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**, Government of India

Established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**

Mandate: Ensure **Safe** and **Wholesome** Food For Human Consumption

Responsible for **protecting** and **promoting public health** through the **regulation** and supervision of **food safety**

Comprehensive Scope and Applicability



The FSS Act extends to the whole of India and covers every stage of the food supply chain. Whether inspecting a street vendor, large manufacturer, or food importer, the Act provides the legal basis for regulatory actions.

Coverage Includes:

- Manufacturing, processing, and packaging operations
- Storage, transportation, and distribution networks
- Sale and import of food products

Key Exclusions

The Act specifically excludes animal feed, live animals (unless processed for consumption), unharvested plants, drugs, cosmetics, and narcotics. These exclusions help delineate the boundaries of food safety regulation.

Does this Act apply to Farmers etc.?

The provisions of this Act shall not apply to any **farmer or fisherman or farming operations or crops or livestock or aquaculture**, and supplies used or produced in farming or products of crops produced by a farmer at farm level or a fisherman in his operations.

(Section 18 (3) of the Act)

FSSAI: The Central Authority

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Apex Structure:

- **Food Authority:** ***Single reference point for all food safety matters***
- **Composition- Chairperson + 22 members** with mandatory one-third women representation

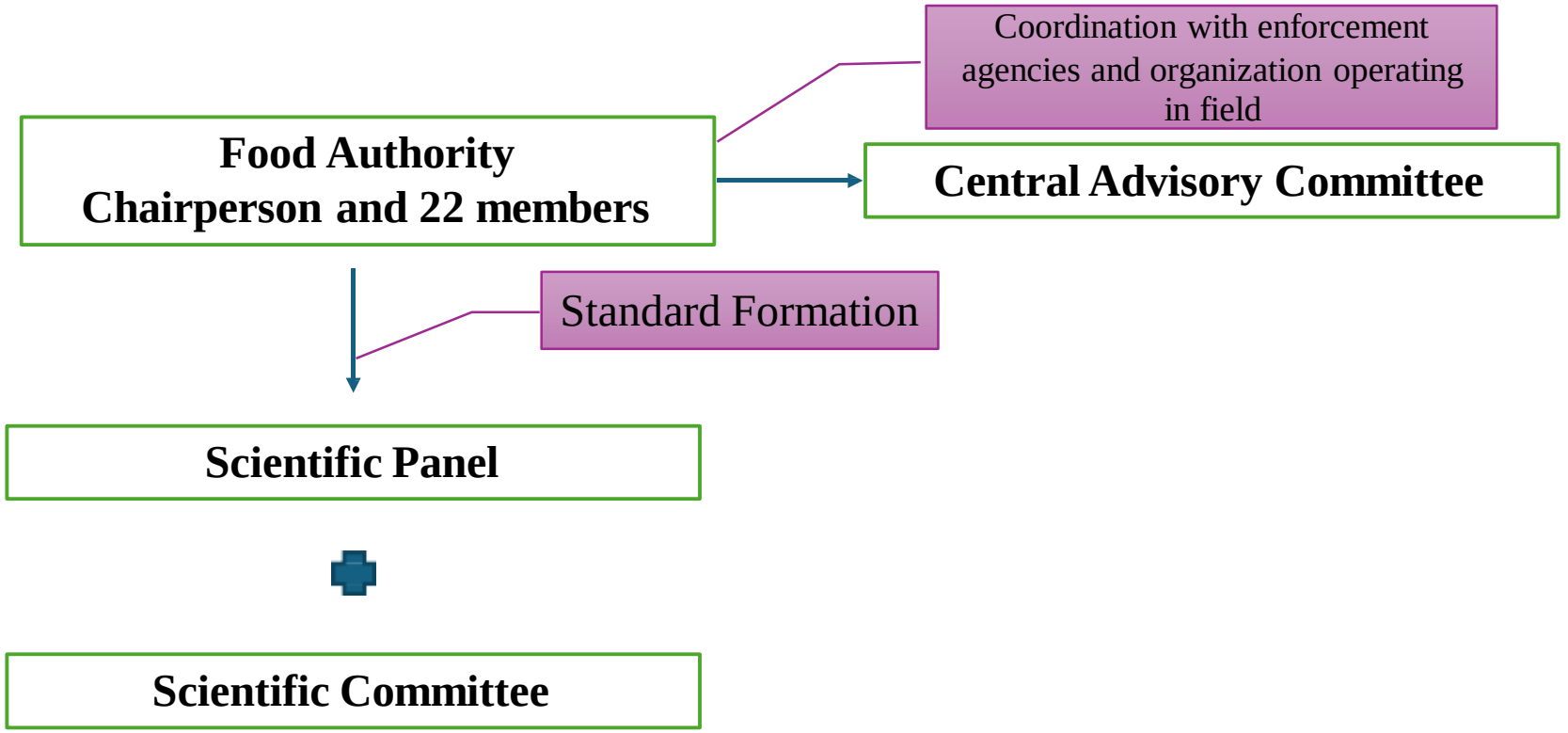
• **Ministries:** Agriculture, Commerce, Consumer Affairs, Food Processing, Health, Legislative Affairs

• **Stakeholders**: Farmers, Scientists & Technologists, Small-scale Industries, Retail Organizations

- **Role of Food Authority:**

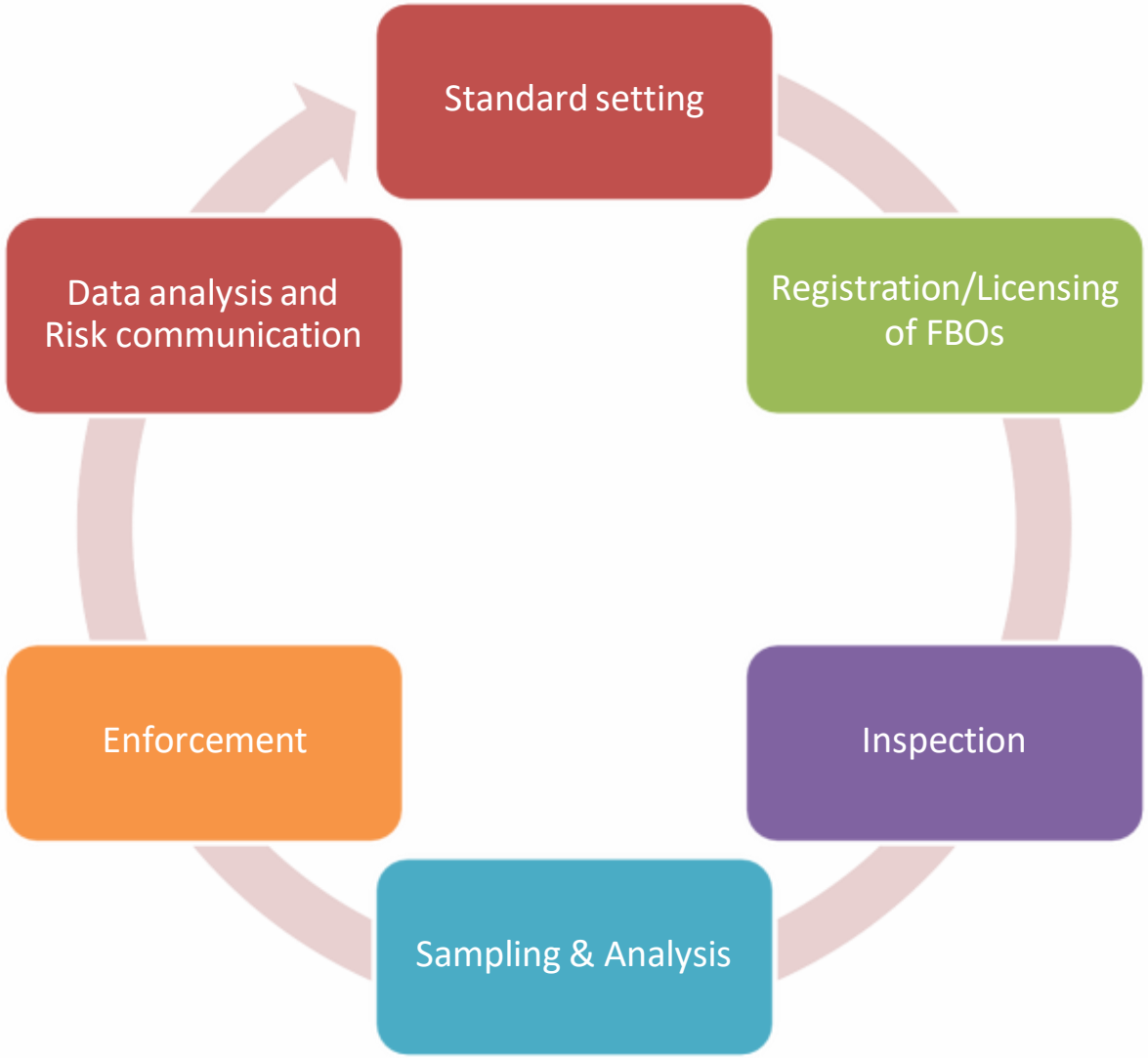
•Formulate **food standards & enforcement systems**
•Specify **limits** for additives, contaminants, residues, heavy metals, etc.
•Set **guidelines for accreditation** of certification bodies & labs
•Define **import quality control** procedures
•Prescribe **sampling, & analysis** methods
•Conduct **national enforcement surveys**
•Frame **labelling & claim standards** (health, nutrition, dietary)
•Capacity Building: Provides scientific advice and technical support, promotes awareness campaigns, and delivers training programs to strengthen the food safety ecosystem.

The Governing Structure of Food Authority



FSSAI's Breadth of Work

Integrated Control Strategy



Central Advisory Committee (CAC)

Acts as interface between central and state authorities.

Ensures **close cooperation between Food Authority and enforcement agencies and organizations**.

Comprises:

- All **Commissioners of Food Safety**
- Representatives from **food industry, agriculture, consumers, relevant research bodies and food laboratories**.
- Representatives of concerned ministries and central governments

Mandate:

- Ensure coordination and uniform implementation of food safety regulations and standards across the country.

Central Advisory Committee

- Ensures coordination between FSSAI and enforcement agencies.
- Advises FSSAI on: Work programmes & priorities, Risk identification and knowledge sharing.
- Constitution of CAC under Section 11 of the FSS Act -
  - ***Central Advisory Committee*** *shall consist of two members each to represent the interests of* ***food industry, agriculture, consumers, relevant research bodies and food laboratories*** *and* ***Commissioner of Food Safety, all States/UTs.***
  - ***Additionally, members from MoHFW, DAHD, Bio-technology, Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Environment & Forests, MoFPI, Panchayati Raj, MSME and food & Public Distribution may also be invited.***

- Frequency of the Meeting – **CAC shall meet not less than 03 times in a year**.
- **Major areas of discussion** during the CAC meeting are:
  - Review of Manpower, sampling and testing of enforcement and surveillance samples
  - Review of Adjudication and Prosecutions cases pendency, consumer grievance status in states
  - Requirement of Training and Capacity building of FSOs and DOs
  - Review of activities taken under Eat Right Initiatives by States
  - Review and monitoring of State food safety labs including Food Safety on Wheel (FSW)

Organization Structure

CHAIRPERSON, FSSAI

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, FSSAI

State License & Registration

COMMISIONER OF FOOD SAFETY, STATE/UT FDA

DESIGNATED OFFICER/ LICENSING AUTHORIOTY/REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

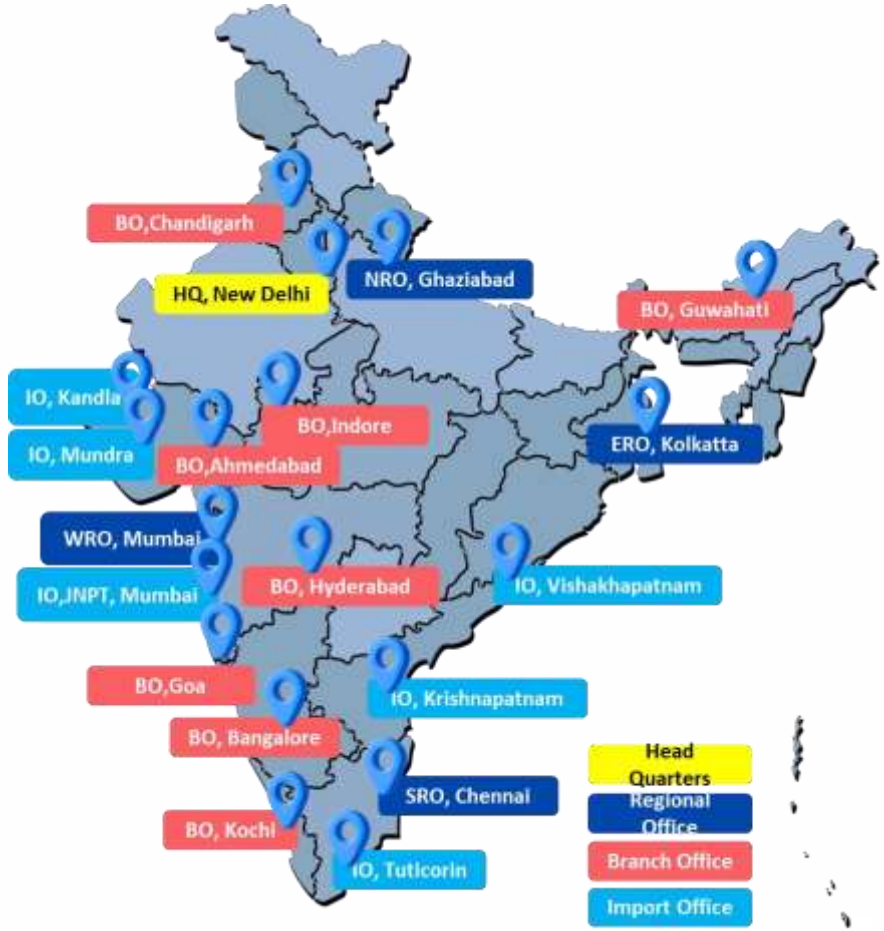
FOOD SAFETY OFFICER
- Inspections, sampling & monitoring of Food Businesses

Central License

REGIONAL OFFICES + BRANCH OFFICES

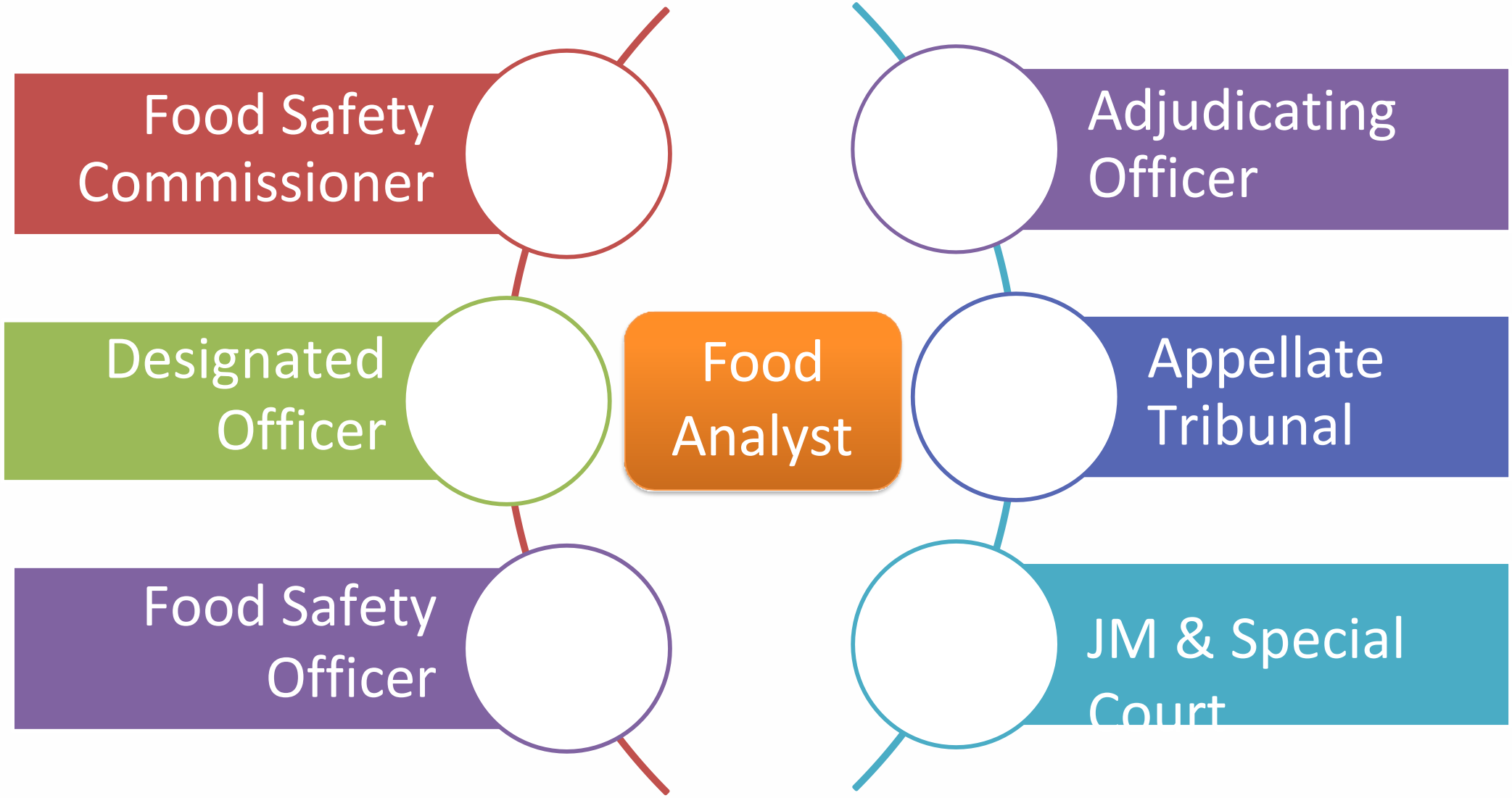
CENTRAL LICENSING AUTHORITY

CENTRAL FOOD SAFETY OFFICER
- Inspections, sampling & monitoring of Food Businesses



The Central Government may give such directions, as it may deem necessary, to a State Government for carrying out all or any of the provisions of this Act and the State Government shall comply with such directions

Enforcement Machinery



Roles and Responsibilities of Enforcement Machineries (at CENTRAL LEVEL)

Officer	Statutory Basis	Principal Duties
1. Chief Executive Officer	**Section 10**	• Day to day administration of FA • Implementation of work programmes and decisions adopted by FA • Execution of budget of Food Authority • Exercise power of **Commissioner of Food Safety**
2. Central Licensing authority (Designated Officer)	**Appointed by CEO by exercising power in Section 10 and Section 36**	• Issue or cancel license of FBOs (central licensed- large scale food business) • Issues improvement notice • Prohibit the sale of food • Receive report and samples of article of foods • Make recommendation to CFS for sanction to launch prosecutions (serious offences) • To launch adjudication cases (minor offences) • Maintain record of all the inspections • Investigate grievances and complaints
3. Central Food Safety Officer (CFSO)	**Appointed by CEO by exercising power in Section 10 and Section 37**	• Conducts inspections of central licensed FBOs • Collects samples • Seize food article or adulterant • Launch prosecution and adjudication cases • Send sample for analysis

Food Safety Authorities in States/UTs

State Food Safety Authorities

Key Functions:

- **Enforcement and Licensing:** Responsible for executing the FSS Act and managing the licensing/renewal processes for small and medium-scale FBOs within the State.
- **Supervision:** Providing direct oversight to Designated Officers (DOs) and Food Safety Officers (FSOs).
- **Legal Action and Awareness:** Investigating consumer complaints, sanctioning prosecution, and directing inspections and public awareness campaigns.
- Submit action taken reports and coordinate with FSSAI

Roles and Responsibilities of Enforcement Machineries (at STATE LEVEL)

Officer	Statutory Basis	Principal Duties
1. Commissioner of Food Safety (CFS)	**Section 30**	• Prohibit manufacture/sale of unsafe food in public interest (up to 1 year) • Conduct surveys of food manufacturing/processing units for compliance • Organize training & awareness programs on food safety • Ensure uniform enforcement of food standards • Sanction prosecutions for serious offences • Appointment of DOs, FSOs and Food analysts
2. Designated Officer (DO)	**Section 36**	• Issue or cancel license of FBOs (small, medium scale food businesses) • Issues improvement notice • Prohibit the sale of food • Receive report and samples of article of foods • Make recommendation to CFS for sanction to launch prosecutions (serious offences) • To launch adjudication (minor offences) • Maintain record of all the inspections • Investigate grievances and complaints
3. Food Safety Officer (FSO)	**Section 37**	• Conducts inspections • Collects samples • Seize food article or adulterant • Launch prosecution and adjudication cases • Send sample for analysis
4. Adjudicating Officer	**Section 68**	• Functions like a **civil court**; proceedings deemed judicial • Impose penalty • Order for cancellation of license • Recall food from market • Issue prohibition orders
5. Food Analysts	**Section 45**	• Compare and note seal & packaging conditions • Request second sample if first is unfit; inform DO • Analyze sample and prepare report within **14 days** • Send lab report to Designated officer
6. Food Safety Appellate Tribunal	**Section 70**	• Forum for appeals lodged by **aggrieved Food Business Operators** contesting orders issued by Adjudicating Officers. • Possesses the authority to confirm, modify, or annul penalties previously imposed.

Shared Responsibility of Food Safety

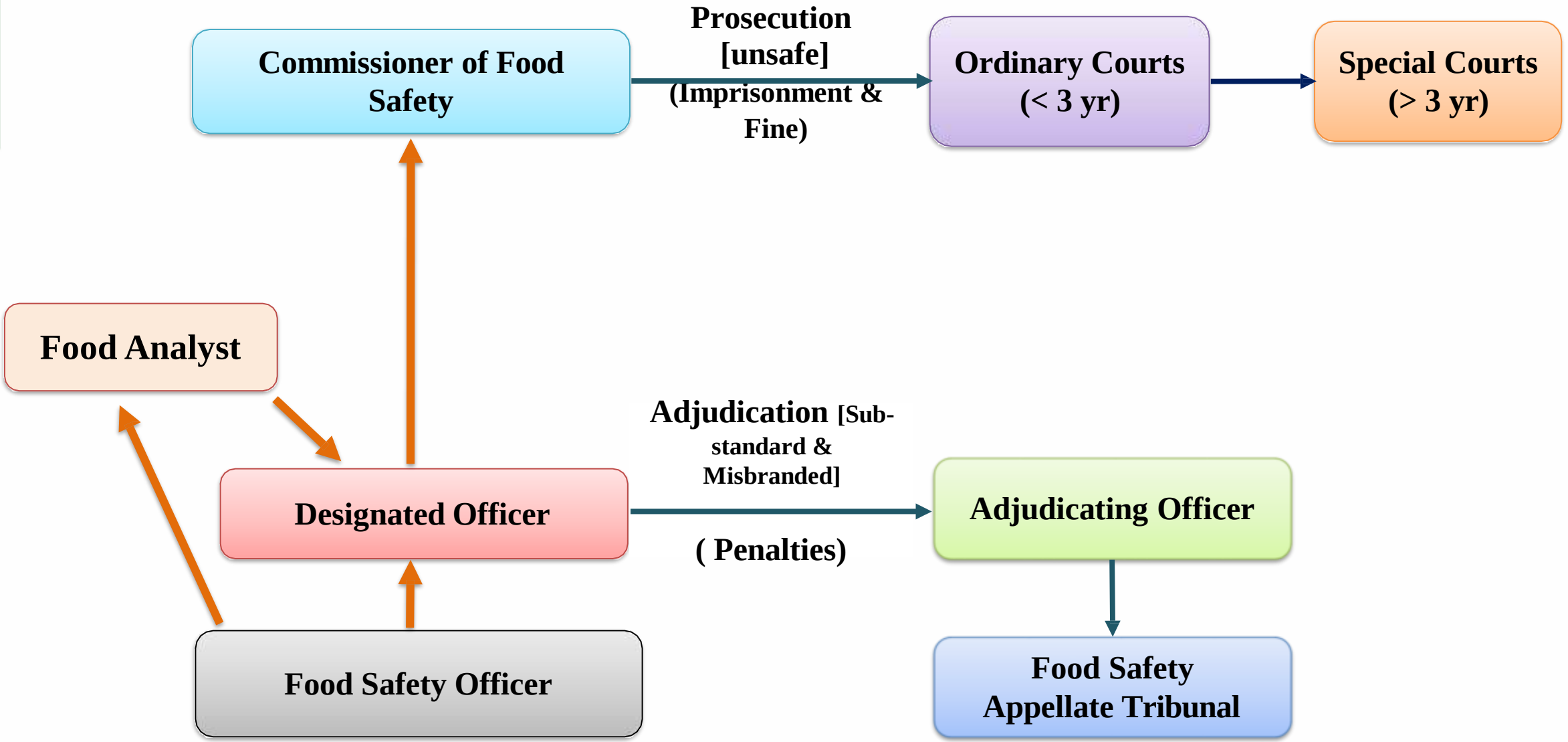
Food safety is a collaborative effort requiring active participation from all stakeholders. Each plays a vital role in ensuring safe and wholesome food reaches consumers.

STAKEHOLDER ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholder	Key Responsibilities
Regulators (FSSAI, State Authorities, FSOs)	Enforcement, monitoring, licensing, inspection, sampling, prosecution, training
Food Business Operators (FBOs)	Compliance with licensing, hygiene, labeling, safety standards; record-keeping; training staff
Laboratories	Analysis of food samples, reporting, maintaining accreditation, supporting enforcement
Consumers	Right to safe food, feedback, complaints, participation in consultations
Civil Society	Awareness, feedback, advocacy, participation in regulatory discussions

Regulators set and enforce standards, FBOs must comply and train their staff, laboratories provide scientific support, consumers have the right to safe food and can lodge complaints, and civil society plays a vital role in advocacy and awareness.

Enforcement Machinery



Sec 29- The Food Authority and **the State Food Safety Authorities** shall be responsible for the enforcement of this Act.

Enforcement Machinery

Pre-licensing Inspections

(High Risk KoBs)

Enforcement Sampling

Third Party Audits

Post-licensing Inspections

Surveillance Sampling / NASP

Hygiene Rating Audits

Sampling

Surveillance
[Rule 2.1.3 (4)(iii)(d)]

- Food Authority to decide - Drawn in 2 parts
- Monitoring purpose
- Non punitive
- Helps in evidence based enforcement sampling

Import
[Sec 25 of FSS Act and Import regulation]

- Drawn in 2 parts
- Regulatory - Verification of compliance

Enforcement
[Sec. 38 and 47 of FSS Act]

- Drawn in 4 parts
- Regulatory - Verification of compliance
- Non compliance leads penalty/punishment

Food Safety Emergency incident

- Less than mandated number

Authorised persons to draw Sample

- Enforcement sample - Food Safety Officer
- Import sample - Authorised officer (AO) or his representative
- Surveillance sample - Technical officer or any other authorised officer

Purchaser [Special provision under Sec. 40 of FSS Act, 2006] – Shall inform FBO about intention of testing – **Form VB**

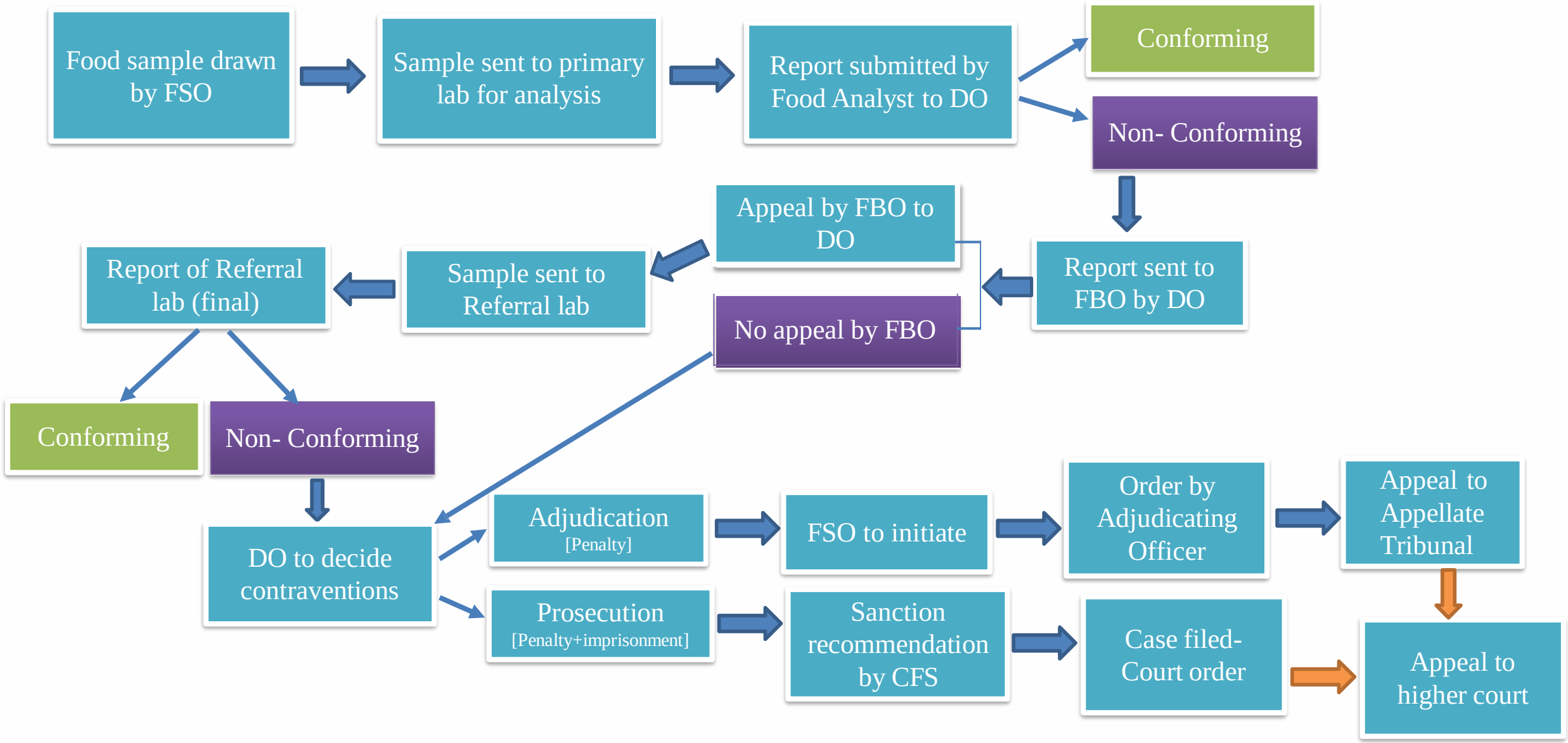
Surveillance sampling

- Conducted under the **National Annual Surveillance Plan of FSSAI –** Identified commodities and target
- Samples analyzed in **FSSAI-notified laboratories**

Outcome:

- Non-compliant samples trigger **enforcement action** and **corrective measures**.
- Data generated are used for **policy formulation**, **risk profiling** and **strengthening regulatory measures**.

Enforcement sampling



Licensing

- FSSAI regulates manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import of food products in the Nation
- No person shall commence or carry on any food business except having valid FSSAI License or Registration
- FSSAI License/Registration is
  - Premise based
  - Granted on the basis of
    - **Food Product Category:** Dairy & Dairy Products, Meat and Meat Products, Cereals and cereal products etc.
    - **Kind of Business (KoB):** Manufacturer, Retailer, Importer, Restaurants etc.
- *Example: A biscuit manufacturer needs a manufacturing category license with "Bakery products." as Food Product category. Other products can also be added to the same license.*

Significance of FSSAI License Number

- Indicates that the product is from a licensed Food Business Operator (FBO).
- Allows consumers to verify the FBO's name, Premise address, license validity, and product category.

Categorised into Central License, State License and Registration.

Type	Issuing Authority	Applicable To
Registration	State Authority	Petty FBOs with annual turnover below ₹12 lakh.
State License	State Authority	FBOs operating solely within a single state (turnover exceeding ₹12 lakh and below ₹20 crore).
Central License	Central Licensing Authority	Operations across multiple states, large manufacturers (e.g., turnover exceeding ₹20 crore), Importers, and Exporters.

Responsibilities of Food Business Operators

1. Ensure food meets **FSS Act, Rules & Regulations** at all stages from manufacturing to sale.

2. **Do not manufacture, store, sell or distribute** food that is:
   - -Unsafe, misbranded, or sub-standard
   - -Lacking a valid license
   - -Prohibited by FSSAI/Central/State Government
   - -In violation of any FSS provision

3. Do not employ persons with infectious or contagious diseases.

4. If any part of batch is found unsafe, the entire lot/batch/consignment is deemed unsafe.

5. If food is found or suspected to be unsafe or non-compliant, immediately **withdraw it** from the market and inform the competent authority.

6. Resolve consumer grievances

Enforcement mechanisms and Tools

FSOs and Designated Officers have a comprehensive range of enforcement tools, from improvement notices to prohibition orders and prosecution. The graduated approach ensures proportionate action while protecting public health.

Improvement Notices

Section 32: Issued for non-compliance, specify corrective actions and timeline. First step giving FBOs chance to rectify issues.

Prohibition Orders

Section 33: Ban manufacture/sale of unsafe food. Used for persistent non-compliance or serious violations.

Emergency Orders

Section 34: Immediate action in public interest for urgent threats to food safety.

Investigation Powers

Section 41: Search, seizure, and investigation powers enable thorough examination of premises and records.

Prosecution

Section 42: Procedure for launching prosecution ensures due process and accountability.

Judicial & Quasi-Judicial Framework

The FSS Act provides comprehensive judicial and quasi-judicial mechanisms to ensure accountability, fairness, and transparency. The system balances enforcement with due process, offering multiple avenues for resolution and appeal.

1

Adjudicating Officer

Section 68: ADM rank officer imposes penalties for non-criminal violations, providing swift resolution for regulatory breaches.

2

Food Safety Appellate Tribunal

Section 70: Presiding Officer at District Judge level hears appeals, ensuring independent review of decisions.

3

High Court Appeal

Section 76: Further appeal mechanism to High Court for complex legal matters requiring higher judicial scrutiny.

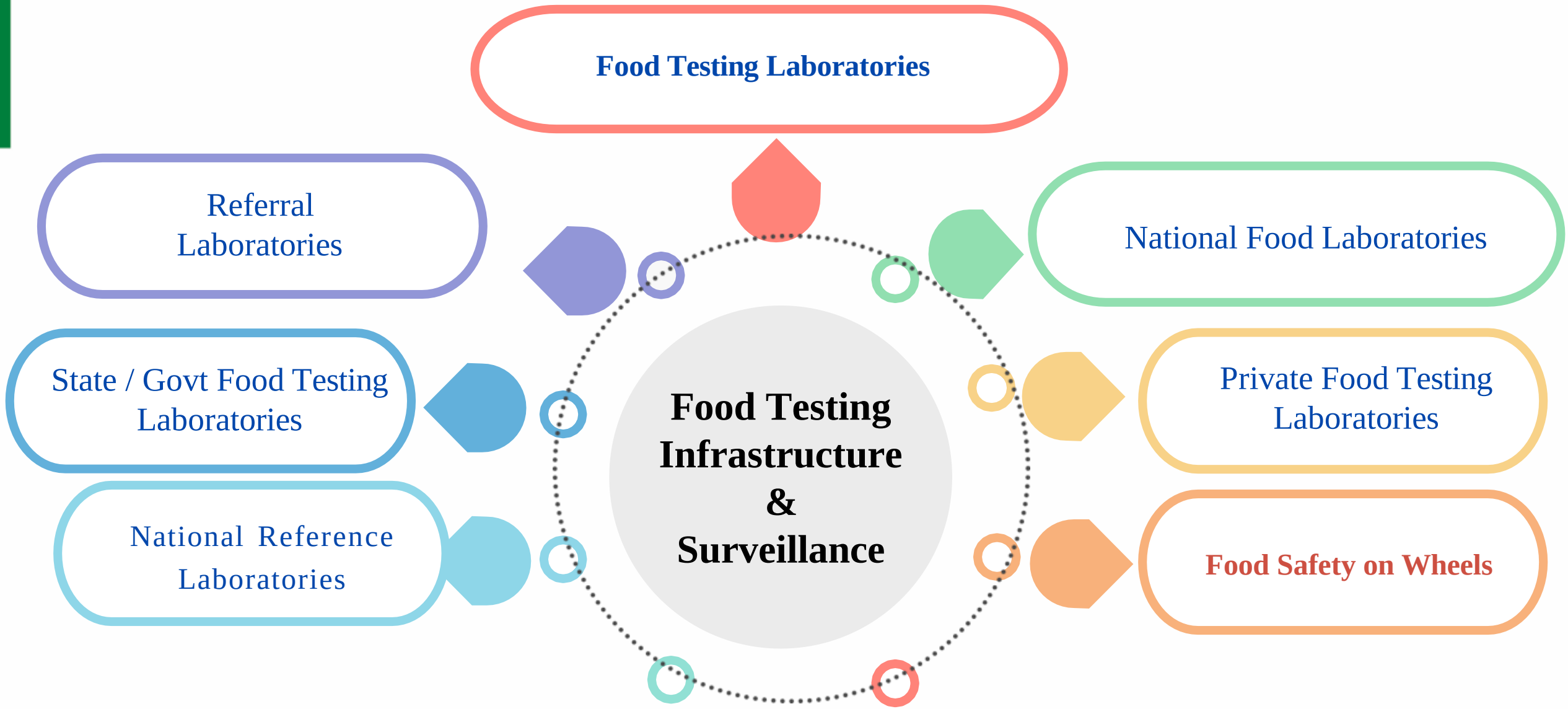
Serious Offences

Section 59: Punishment for unsafe food can extend up to life imprisonment for grave violations endangering public health.

Consumer Protection

Section 65: Compensation provisions for injury or death ensure victims receive redress for harm caused by unsafe food.

Food Testing Infrastructure



Coordination and Communication

- **Central-State coordination:** through periodic review meetings and advisories.
- **FBO engagement:** via capacity-building programs and stakeholder consultations.
- **Risk communication:** through public advisories, awareness campaigns and guidance documents.
- **Consumer participation:** consumer grievance portals

Digital Transformation in Food Safety

Digital platforms have revolutionized food safety compliance and enforcement, enabling real-time monitoring, transparent reporting, and efficient operations. FSOs must be proficient in using these tools for effective regulation.

FoSCoS Platform

Food Safety Compliance System provides online portal for licensing, registration, inspection, and annual returns. Integrated with FoSCoRIS inspection app, INFoLNET lab network, and third-party audits with real-time dashboards.

Food Safety Connect App

Mobile application empowers consumers with complaint filing, FBO registration, and inspection checklists. QR code system enables instant grievance reporting in restaurants and hotels.

RUCO Initiative

Repurpose Used Cooking Oil program ensures safe collection and conversion of used oil to biodiesel, promoting sustainability and preventing health hazards from reused cooking oil.

Eat Right India

Comprehensive public awareness campaign for safe, healthy, and sustainable food. Includes Clean Street Food Hub, Eat Right Campus, Hygiene Rating, and Food Fortification initiatives.

Effective data management through FoSCoS dashboards and INFoLNET enables risk-based inspections, targeted enforcement, and transparent reporting. FSOs must maintain accurate records of inspections, sampling, enforcement actions, and complaints to support accountability and continuous improvement.

Data Management, MIS, and Reporting

FoSCoS Dashboard

Provides drillable, state-wise summaries of license and registration status for comprehensive oversight

INFoLNET Integration

Integrates lab test reports, sample tracking, and surveillance planning in one unified system

Real-Time Insights

Enables risk-based inspections, targeted enforcement, and transparent reporting across all operations

Record Maintenance

FSOs must maintain accurate records of inspections, sampling, enforcement actions, and complaints

Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

Stakeholder engagement ensures that regulations are practical, accepted, and effective. FSOs should actively participate in outreach activities, respond to consumer complaints, and collaborate with industry and civil society. Transparent communication builds trust and enhances compliance.

01

Public Consultations

Conducted before finalizing rules and regulations to ensure stakeholder input

02

Multiple Feedback Channels

Online forms, helplines, email, WhatsApp, and Food Safety Connect Portal available

03

Consumer Complaint Management

Complaints prioritized and forwarded to State Designated Officers and FBOs

04

Industry Outreach

Training programs, audits, and collaborative campaigns with food businesses

05

Civil Society Involvement

NGOs engaged in awareness, advocacy, and capacity building initiatives

Challenges in Implementation

Despite a robust legal framework, implementation faces significant challenges. The states, must address staffing shortages, strengthen lab infrastructure, and improve coordination. Procedural rigor is essential to avoid legal setbacks, as seen in high-profile cases. Continuous public awareness is needed to drive demand for safe food.

Human Resource Shortages

Critical gaps in FSO staffing across states impacting enforcement capacity

Laboratory Infrastructure

Limited NABL-accredited labs, equipment shortages, and insufficient qualified analysts

Legal Gaps

Procedural lapses, delays in adjudication, and lack of standardized performance indicators

Public Awareness

Low consumer knowledge of food safety rights and complaint mechanisms

Strategies for Effective Enforcement & Key Takeaways

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Enforcement Strategies

- **Risk-based inspections:** Prioritize high-risk foods, businesses, and regions
- **Capacity building:** Regular training for FSOs, lab staff, and FBOs
- **Strategic partnerships:** Collaborate with industry, academia, NGOs, and government agencies
- **Digital tools:** Leverage FoSCoS, FoSCoRIS, INFoLNET for real-time tracking
- **Annual audits:** Evaluate sampling, prosecution, and conviction records
- **Performance benchmarks:** Introduce key result areas and publish evaluations

Key Takeaways

- FSS Act, 2006 provides comprehensive food safety framework
- FSSAI and State Authorities play central regulatory roles
- FSOs are frontline enforcers under Sections 37–39
- Licensing, labeling, hygiene, and surveillance are critical pillars
- Judicial mechanisms ensure accountability and consumer protection
- Capacity building and digital tools enhance effectiveness
- Risk-based strategies and partnerships drive progress

Food safety is a dynamic and evolving field. As FSOs, you are entrusted with safeguarding public health and consumer rights. By applying the principles, standards, and tools discussed today, you can make a meaningful impact in your communities. Stay informed, proactive, and collaborative in your approach.

UPHOLD FSS ACT PRINCIPLES
MILK
FOSTER SAFETY, TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY
ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY
BE PROACTIVE, ETHICAL, AND VIGILANT

Thank You